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Malawi Food Crisis Targeted by Face-to-Face's Victory Garden Campaign Spreading High-Yield Home Gardens to Malawians Facing Famine

Brooklyn, NY and Lilongwe, Malawi — In early December 2016, Face-to-Face's *Victory Garden Campaign to Fight the Food Crisis in Malawi* surpassed 1,000 gardens created since the Campaign's launch in July. With Malawi facing its worst food crisis due to drought, these low-cost high-yield home gardens are delivering long-term, sustainable relief to families, many of whom have had no food since August.

A Local Movement Led by Tribal Chiefs

In over 200 villages, 90 local garden facilitators are conducting victory garden workshops to groups of 30 villagers, including scores of chiefs. Villagers then create home gardens that utilize permaculture, organic, and bio-intensive farm practices — practices that increase plant diversity and harvests, decrease risk and debt, boost nutrition, reduce erosion, and improve soil fertility.

Benefits come quickly to families, as vegetables like mustard and pumpkin leaves are ready to harvest in less than 4 weeks. The gardens continue producing as other leafy vegetables, tomatoes, beans, okra, onions, root vegetables, maize, and edible indigenous plants begin bearing food. Village chiefs are seeing the immediate benefits these gardens have on families as well as the community at large — communities with food are more stable and have less death, disease, and crime.

Neighbors Teaching Neighbors

Nearly 900 gardens were created in 27 workshops in October and November. In addition, a group of rural HIV+ mothers, the Strong & Positive Mothers Club of Kang'oma, used their knowledge of victory gardens to help 150 families create gardens. In many cases, the mothers used the experience of teaching gardening as a way to help families feel more comfortable to talk openly about HIV.

One village, Nyama, saw the number of families having gardens go from 0% in July to over 60% by November. Other villages saw similar dramatic increases, due in part to neighbors teaching neighbors. Since home gardens are visible to everyone, people are naturally curious about these new sources of food, helping them re-envision the area around the home that is traditionally left as hard packed clay that is swept clean everyday.

Victory Gardens to Fight the War against Hunger

Incorporating a variety of indigenous and medicinal plants, even in small amounts, into villager's diets has proven to have significant health benefits. Villagers, witnessing the benefits these gardens offer, are requesting through their chief structure to have Face-to-Face expand into their communities.

With low implementation costs and proven immediate results, Face-to-Face asks for more support to expand the Victory Garden Campaign so it can realize its goal of helping 100,000 Malawians benefit from victory gardens by the end of 2017.

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For more information, visit www.facetoface.org.

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About The Face-to-Face Project (F2F):

The Face-to-Face Project established in 2006 as a U.S.-based international charity, works directly on the ground to help the poorest communities break the cycle of poverty. Face-to-Face's Malawi office is officially registered as a local Malawi NGO. F2F can offer visual materials of the Campaign, as well as opportunities to set up visits and interviews with local farmers in the target villages.